

Leicester, June 30. 1859,
Massachusetts.

Dear Miss Wigham,

Your note came duly to my hand, and I lost no time in ordering the two copies of the "Standard" ^{to be} sent to your address; - to commence May 5th. And I have since heard from the New York Office that the order is duly entered, and that the papers "should go by first steamer." I hope they will have made report for themselves, before you receive this. - I was quite interested in what you wrote of Dr. Monod. It was an excellent thing that you called him to account on the spot, - and something rash in him, to venture from home so far North as Edinburgh! This sectarianism in religion is such a blind to the conscience & to the integrity of the moral vision, and so dwarfs and misleads vast bodies of men & women, that I have been led to think, and to say, that I have come to think better of a people's chance for moral & spiritual growth, when I hear that they have no minister in their town, than when I know they are largely supplied in that direction. At the same time I know, and gladly testify to, the exceeding value & benefit, to all

who come within the range of his influence,
of a truly conscientious & faithful minister
of Jesus Christ, - of one who shall honestly
set forth the principles and spirit of his
religion, without waiting to know first,
whether it will be for his own present
advantage to speak it, whether it will
build up his congregation or alienate
one and another from it, and whether it
will have the approbation of his ministerial
brethren around him, or meet their censure
as injudicious & injurious to their Zion!
But it is so common with our American
ministers, of all denominations, to give
themselves up to be controlled by such con-
siderations as I have named, and to make
a faithful exposition & application of Christian
truth & principle entirely secondary to them,
that I have come to prefer trusting, for
myself & others, to the prevalent moral
instincts and to the educated moral sense
of the great body of the public, than to
subordinate these to the guidance of a class,
set apart as authoritative teachers, and who,
almost of necessity, fall into the priest's ways.
- I know the exceptions, and honor them as I
honor few other persons. But they are very
rare, here, and ^{they} maintain their integrity,

and their independence, with difficulty. Few
men can stay in the ministry here, without
being trimmers and compromisers, and the
greater part of those who cannot submit to
such conditions, leave it altogether. - But I did
not mean to be betrayed, by Dr. Monod, into this
long digression. - Your letter to Mrs. Stowe was
forwarded without delay; & I sent your note (to
myself) to Mrs. Chapman, that she might have the
information, & perhaps make some use of it for
the "Standard". She still retains the note; so
there may be some points in it which I shall omit
to notice here. Do you ever see our Boston
"Atlantic Monthly Magazine"? Mrs. Stowe is now
contributing to its columns quite an interesting
story, "The Minister's Wooing". The "Atlantic" is
more like your Blackwood, in some respects, than
any periodical we have ever before had in America.
It is totally different from that, in regard to its
political & governmental ideas; - but, like that,
it has ideas of its own, - pretty decided ones, too - and
does not hesitate to express them. It is decidedly
"progressive", in theology, politics, & as to social
reforms. - Mr. L.'s story is meeting with a good
deal of favor here. - I think I have
mentioned to you that my Cousin, - Rev. Saml,
Joseph May, of Syracuse, N.Y. - is now in Europe.
His health being much impaired (he is over 60 yrs. old)

MS. B. 1. 6 v. 7, p. 30

for the cause. The sum is not a very large one; even tho' he has other resources, the American friends would gladly contribute to it. - But I must stop. - With sincere regards, Mr. & Mrs. May have really striven, surely this is little enough. - We see now that he has obtained some position as a lecturer.

he went about the 1st of January last to the South of Europe, where he spent the winter, since which he has been making his way to the North, and was to arrive in London about this time. I hope he will be able to spend at least two or three months in Gr. Britain, and feel strong enough both to preach, & speak on the question of Slavery. He is a very genial & agreeable man - a very general favorite here, - and I think will make many friends, if he will only make himself known. I have urged his going to Edinburgh among other places. If he does, I doubt not he will proceed forthwith to make himself known to your family.

I thank you for a copy of your Society's Annual Report, rec^d. some little time since. I am always glad to see these. You will be receiving, about this time I hope, some of the American Socy's Annual Reports for years '57, & '58.

And I thank you, from my heart, for your kind wishes and hopes in behalf of our far absent boy. It is now nearly ten for us to be hearing of his Ship's arrival at Ceylon. A few weeks since most unexpectedly, came a letter from him. It was written when I was out, & put on board a passing ship. It was very interesting to us, & contained a very good report up to that time. - My mother, of whom you kindly inquire, is now at my house, making us a short visit. She is very well. If my father & mother live three weeks longer, they will attain the 50th Anniversary of their marriage. - My wife's health is now pretty good. For 3 months after Edward's away, she was very miserably in health - not, I think, so much from anxiety on account, as from other causes, but I have no doubt the former had its influence.

As to the case of George Thompson, I am obliged for what you said. Our Boston friends acted entirely on the letter of my Cousin S. J. M. written after paying some visit to G. T. - I confess I felt that more information sh^d have been obtained. - I think about £200. have been sent to him, - collected from numbers who knew & admired his earl

P. P. — July 1st. — I ought to have more particularly acknowledged your Mother's letter to Mr. May, with yr. to myself accompanying it, of April 8th & which we recd. the 27th of that month, — since which I have not written to you. I hardly need say that the reasons, as expressed by you both, for not undertaking a contribution to the Worcester A. S. Fair, are perfectly conclusive, & show that such a contribution is quite impossible at this time. These reasons have been duly laid before the Ladies' Committee of that Fair, — and all saw them to be satisfactory. They are not discouraged. They mean to have an Antislavery Sale — sometime in Oct^r, and hope to be able to add some new features of interest, — not yet determined on. — We shall therefore put no dependence whatever on receiving anything from abroad; so that if anything sh^d. come, as your note to me suggests to be ^{barely} possible, it will be ~~a~~ wholly unexpected, & therefore all the more encouraging.

You suggest, as a possible plan, the sending all your future contributions direct to my care. I can only say that I shall be very glad to serve the cause, and forward in any way your charitable designs, in this matter. Still I am not clear that such would be the best disposition of the goods, — tho' I have not thought much about it. Some of us have been earnestly hoping that the New York ladies would soon "come into line" better, and "advance to the front". They are holding an Annual Fair, of a mixed character —

partly to aid the Vigilance Committee (for Fugitives) - partly for
the American A. S. Society, and I think there is yet another ^{variety of objects} ~~object~~.
This is unwise, I am sure; - they (naturally enough) think
they know their own business best. But they, who have
^{served} ~~known~~ a 25 years' apprenticeship to this business, ^{as the Boston Ladies have} know
better; & are entitled to speak positively from a thorough
experience. They have learned - (what a perfectly clear
sighted person would know a priori -) that half-way
measures are not the best, even to aid the secondary
& collateral branches. In a moral movement, let
those who have learned the true & righteous principle
labor for it, - it first, it last, - and allow no
compromise or bargaining. They ^{will thus} keep the cause
clear of bad entanglements, they ^{will} make themselves to be
understood (which is every thing,) they ^{will} keep up ^{the tone of} their own
associates, (a very necessary thing,) - and they ^{will} ~~not~~ not
prevent an effort in behalf of secondary objects; but
on the contrary, make it all the surer that such an
effort will be made, and more effectual, when it is
- But I spin out too much. I only ^{aimed} ~~meant~~ to explain
what I meant, by wishing those N. Y. ladies to "come up
higher"; and, if they would take a wholly clean position
free of all involvements and sideway responsibilities,
we believe they could have an excellent Bazaar, and
then, beyond all others, ^{they} ~~would~~ be entitled to receive the gifts
of our friends abroad.

My wife desires her love to you & to your Mother.
She is very much occupied at present (having several
friends staying with us -) and therefore defers writing to you.

I am greatly in debt to Mary Estlin in the
letter way, & mean to write to her very soon.

With sincere regard, Very truly

Your friend Samuel May.

Ms. B.1.6 v.7, p.53